

Signage – Reducing Energy and PVC Consumption



Environmental and Human Health Impact: Eliminates consumption of 800 cubic feet of vinyl per year for signage lettering and 86 percent energy savings from LED exterior signage lighting.

Business Impact: Over 46 percent savings in total cost of ownership and energy reduction. Contract implementation date: May 2010.

Challenge

Kaiser Permanente uses exterior and interior signage and design elements, such as site maps, to aid in the way-finding process. A consistent and clear way-finding method at medical facilities is critical for getting patients to their desired destination swiftly and without frustration. At Kaiser Permanente we leave few stones unturned when looking for environmentally preferable products, and signage is no exception.

Aim/Goal

- Improve quality, brand/look consistency of signage, and customer service of supplier.
- Reduce energy use of illuminated exterior signs; eliminate neon lighting (which contains mercury) and replace it with LEDs.
- Eliminate polyvinyl chloride (PVC) used on interior signs.
- Reduce costs for sign design and manufacturing.

Team

John Kouletsis, Director, National Facilities Services (NFS), Strategy Planning Design (SPD)

Linda Raker, Project Principal, NFS, SPD

Michael Schroeder, Project Manager & Content Expert, NFS

Dennis Noecker, Sourcing Manager, Procurement & Supply (PS)

Mitzi Murakami, Senior Consultant, Supplier Diversity, PS

Actions Taken

- ✓ Gathered key stakeholders for input on current state of design methods and standardization, customer satisfaction, ordering and delivery process.
- ✓ Research marketplace for suppliers with capabilities to eliminate PVC and provide energy saving solutions.
- ✓ Completed bid for signage manufacturing and installation. The evaluation criteria used in the selection process included several areas: ability to provide diverse types of signage nationally, overall value and affordability, sustainability, and customer service.

Results

- ✓ The selection of a national supplier that can provide services in all KP regions.
- ✓ Switched from PVC lettering to all digital printing for interior signs - eliminating 800 cubic feet of vinyl.
- ✓ Switched neon to LED lighting on large illuminated exterior signs for 12 sites. LED uses 14 percent the energy neon signs consume, and lasts 12 years before servicing is required, vs. neon lighting which must be serviced every 18 months.



**Elimination of 800 cu ft of vinyl
(enough to fill a 16 foot moving
van!)**

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Including signage consultants in the communication and implementation process will streamline the overall transition to a new supplier.
- ✓ Very few suppliers offer one-stop shopping for both exterior and interior signage, a critical need for an organization as large and geographically diverse as KP.

Next Steps

- ✓ Upon completion of the implementation process (expected to be complete in 2011), NFS will work with the supplier on value engineering the existing signs for potential cost, environmental, and lead-time reductions. This effort will be on-going for the balance of the agreement.
- ✓ For further cost savings and mercury reduction, continue to change exterior signage from neon to LED.
- ✓ Work with NFS and sign consultants over the life of the agreement on way-finding methods that will reduce the number of signs needed. This will also result in additional cost reductions for Kaiser Permanente, and eliminate materials needed as a result of fewer signs being manufactured.